

was cleanly written and showed a productive study of late Stravinsky. Alvin Etler's *Five Speeds for Flute, Oboe, Viola and Bassoon* were neither clever nor otherwise interesting. Etler has done much better things than this, let's hope that the preoccupation with McBride is a passing phase. *Gather Ye Rosebuds*, a song of Miriam Gideon, though conventional, was much more successful than *Sonnet* and *The Too-Late Born* which started well, only to disintegrate. The program closed with an unconvincing *Oboe Sonata* by Jacobo Ficher and several totally nondescript pieces by Hector Tosar and Alberto Ginastero, both seventeen-year old South Americans.

The second concert was much more fruitful. Ben Gossick's *First String Quartet* is full of a primitive American feeling, naive, yet distinguished in character. The slow movement, "New mown hay and prairie moon," is a genuinely moving fugue, and although the first and third movements are too square, and overwork their short rhythmic patterns, the freshness of feeling almost make one forget the flaws.

The twelve-tone school was also represented. Emil Koehler's *Piano Sonata* has good structure and the rhythms of the last movement are interesting. But when over, it was like having eaten a filling meal that didn't really taste. Charles Naginski's best songs are those in a simple pastoral vein, like *The Pasture* and *A Bird Came Down the Walk*; but *Trickle Drops* is Whitman and Naginski at their worst; *Mother and Babe* and *A Lady* are handicapped by poor texts.

The *Sonatina for Oboe, Clarinet, and Piano* by Donald Fuller, was very moving without being pretentious. The opening and the second theme of the first movement, and the final coda were all exceptionally beautiful, and the texture of the work bright and airy. It encourages much hope for this composer's future. Very contrapuntal, very long and very dull was Robert Laidlaw's *Trio for Strings*. Harold Shapiro's *Trumpet Sonata*, contrastingly lively, was for all its formlessness and lack of direction very good fun. It would rattle along at a great rate with a boogie-woogie-like bass, then go slow while the muted trumpet played, then fast again. Not a dull moment, no depth, but the gay, pleasant, sophisticated mood of a good night spot.

Robert Ward

MUSIC IN BRITAIN, COME WHAT MAY

MUSICAL activity has been increasing lately, in opposite tempo to the declining air raids. It is clear that people still want music

whenever they can possibly get it. In London the big orchestral concerts are mostly on Saturday afternoons, and the old-established organizations like the Royal Philharmonic Society have given several programs, including one conducted by Leslie Heward. A new body called the Sidney Beer Symphony Orchestra has announced an enterprising series of concerts which include the first performances in England of Bartok's *Divertimento for Strings* and Ibert's *Flute Concerto*. Provincial orchestras have had quite a successful winter season, and the London Philharmonic Orchestra has given a good many concerts all over the country, as the world now knows, under the unexpected auspices of Jack Hylton. Edmund Rubbra's third symphony had its premiere at a recent Hallé concert.

In addition, the daily National Gallery chamber music concerts still continue and so do local chamber music programs all over the country. The two wartime entertainment bodies, ENSA and CEMA have organized literally hundreds of concerts in rest centers and factories besides providing shows for the troops. The Old Vic opera company is on tour with a skeleton orchestra. It has recently revived *The Beggar's Opera* and *Hänsel und Gretel* as well as the usual old favorites.

The ballet is in full flower here. The new Anglo-Polish troupe is on tour, but in London there are still two permanent lunch-time ballets, and the Sadler's Wells company has just ended a five weeks' season there, in the course of which they produced a first-class new work by Frederick Ashton, *The Wanderer Fantasia*, to Schubert's music. This is much on the same lines as the Liszt *Dante Sonata*, but even more effective. It has a fine décor by Graham Sutherland and was superbly danced by the whole company with Robert Halpmann and Margot Fonteyn as the principals. There was also a revival of the Gertrude Stein - Lord Berners *Wedding Bouquet*, with the running commentary spoken into a microphone by Constant Lambert, who is still doing excellent work as music director of the company.

So many musicians have gone into the RAF that an RAF Symphony Orchestra has been formed which includes the complete Griller Quartet and a good many London Philharmonic players. In Britain, it seems, music is determined to flourish, come what may.

Humphrey Searle

THE LEAGUE'S EVENING OF FILMS

THERE appears to be a great attraction in music-with-films — much more, one gathers, than in music-minus-the-films. Unfortunately few